

ORIGINAL

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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PUBLIC HEARING :  
WORKING DRAFT SIX-YEAR :  
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM 2007-2012 :  
----- :

MAY 9, 2006  
6:00 P.M.

P. O. Box 12628  
Roanoke, Virginia 24027

A P P E A R A N C E S

Commonwealth Transportation Board:  
 Pierce R. Homer, Chairman  
 Alan Tobias  
 Gregory A. Whirley, Sr.  
 Dana Martin  
 James Lee Keen

Speakers

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1 THE CHAIRMAN, PIERCE HOMER: Good evening,  
2 my name is Pierce Homer, I'm the Chairman of the  
3 Commonwealth Transportation Board and I'm pleased  
4 to welcome everyone here tonight for the public  
5 hearing on the working draft of our six-year  
6 improvement program.

7 I am going to have a little bit to say  
8 about the content of this so that people in their  
9 public commentary can be informed about the  
10 underlying financial and project assumptions.

11 But before we do that I wanted to  
12 introduce the other members of the Commonwealth  
13 Transportation Board who are here. Mr. James  
14 Keen, to my far left. Mr. Dana Martin, who  
15 represents the Salem district, Greg Whirley, who  
16 is the VDOT Commissioner, and Alan Tobias, who is  
17 representing the Director of the Department of  
18 Rail and Public Transportation.

19 So we are here to hear the public's  
20 comments tonight. I would be remiss if I did not  
21 acknowledge the district administrators who are  
22 here. I see Richard Caywood. Jim Gibbons and  
23 Gary Moore from the Staunton district, and  
24 Tom Ramey from the Lynchburg district. There you

1 are. And those gentlemen are charged with the  
2 day-to-day implementation of the various VDOT  
3 programs.

4 Folks who work in Alan's shop work on a  
5 statewide basis with regional and local transit  
6 providers, and importantly and increasingly with  
7 our rail partners. Yesterday I was privileged to  
8 be here with Governor Kaine to announce a major  
9 partnership with Norfolk Southern Railroad, it's  
10 called the Heartland Corridor.

11 That would expand the capacity of that  
12 railroad and the ability to carry freight on the  
13 Norfolk Southern freight lines, go all the way to  
14 the Port of Virginia and into West Virginia,  
15 Ohio. So that was a significant event for us.

16 In preparation for the public commentary,  
17 and once we begin, we do have sign-up sheets, I  
18 will ask if there are any elected officials, I  
19 believe the Vice Mayor is here to give some  
20 opening remarks.

21 I would like to give folks an overview of  
22 the working draft of the program because there  
23 have been very substantial changes, and very  
24 substantial changes even from the six-year program

1           that is in place today, and these are important  
2           and in many cases troubling changes.

3           So it is a smaller program, principally in  
4           the areas of primary, secondary, urban and public  
5           transportation. Well, why is that? How could the  
6           six-year program be less today than it was a year  
7           ago. Well, we are required by law to base our  
8           six-year program on official revenue estimates.

9           Many of you may know there is no budget  
10          today in the General Assembly, so we fall back on  
11          a series of revenue estimates that dates back to  
12          last November. Why is this law on the books?

13          Well, several years ago the Commonwealth  
14          Transportation Board, and I'll say about five  
15          years ago, fell into some very bad habits of  
16          guessing or anticipating or hoping what the  
17          General Assembly or Congress might do in the way  
18          of transportation funding.

19          You know, we all want to believe the best  
20          in life, and so those revenue forecasts were very  
21          optimistic. So much so that in the year 2002 we  
22          were asked by the Auditor of Public Accounts, that  
23          is an independent agency chartered by the General  
24          Assembly, to review our revenue forecasting

1 ability, and what we found was a tremendous gap  
2 between what we were going to get versus what we  
3 were hoping to get.

4 You know how far off we were? 27 percent.  
5 We were estimating about 10 billion dollars in  
6 revenues over six years at that time, and the  
7 reality was we were only going to get about 7.3.  
8 So the General Assembly passed a law that said you  
9 got to use official revenue estimates, and it was  
10 a prudent choice, it's just simple honesty, simple  
11 good arithmetic.

12 The other part of that was requiring that  
13 the six-year program be adopted by July 1, that's  
14 when our fiscal year begins, and just with any  
15 business when your fiscal year begins you need to  
16 have a budget in place, and that requirement, that  
17 legal requirement was put in at approximately the  
18 same time.

19 Now let me tell you about the drivers. In  
20 addition to, I mentioned decreased revenues, why  
21 is that? Well, it's very simple. Our major  
22 source of revenue is the gas tax. 17 and a-half  
23 cents per gallon. As the price of gasoline goes  
24 up, people consume less, and our revenues go down.

1 A very simple trade off.

2 On the cost side of the equation, and  
3 again, everyone of you who is in business or  
4 public life know about the impact of fuel costs  
5 now routinely topping three dollars a gallon,  
6 asphalt alone up by 34 percent in the last  
7 quarter, those translate to dramatically  
8 increasing costs, not only for highway  
9 construction, but importantly for highway  
10 maintenance.

11 And as our first responsibility,  
12 maintenance costs, it costs more to do an asphalt  
13 overlay, it costs more to replace guardrail  
14 because of steel and concrete, go on and on down  
15 the list. What that does is it increases the  
16 maintenance budget by about 362 million dollars  
17 over six years. That's 362 million dollars right  
18 out of the construction program.

19 And that's one of the major reasons for the  
20 reduction in this construction program. I  
21 mentioned about the revenues dropping, that's a  
22 221 million dollar reduction. Everybody says,  
23 well, gosh, we just got the highway bill, that  
24 means more money, right? Yes, but the money

1 doesn't go to the core programs.

2 And understand this about that last federal  
3 transportation bill. 75 percent of the new money  
4 goes to earmarked federal projects. It doesn't go  
5 to the traditional urban or secondary or  
6 interstate programs, it's designated for specific  
7 projects, and we have to take state dollars and  
8 match that.

9 So in effect those earmarks become a  
10 mandate on how to spend not only the federal money  
11 but the 20 percent match we are mandated to match  
12 that, otherwise we lose the money. So what this  
13 means is that, yes, there is an increase in  
14 federal money, but the demands created by that  
15 federal money exceed what's available to us.

16 It's a puzzling situation, but a financial  
17 reality we have to deal with. So if you add those  
18 up, declining revenues because of gas tax, the  
19 rising costs, asphalt, steel, concrete, and I  
20 would add to this list federal mandates, and  
21 increasing maintenance needs.

22 All of those combine into a perfect storm,  
23 if you will, of reduced money available for  
24 highway construction. Now, there is a similar set



1 of problems underway in the world of public  
2 transportation, and if you are a local transit  
3 provider the cost of fuel and diesel is a big  
4 component in a local transit budget, the cost of  
5 buying or replacing a bus is up substantially.

6 There is a lot of facilities and capital  
7 improvements that go along with the public  
8 transportation system. The same factors are very  
9 much at work with our public transportation  
10 system, and what you will see is the total set of  
11 impacts here.

12 Look down at the bottom, public  
13 transportation impacts, a 21 percent capital  
14 reimbursement. Historically that's the lowest  
15 rate it's ever been. It used to be that the state  
16 said we have got a goal of paying 95 percent of  
17 the capital costs for a new bus that a locality  
18 buys.

19 Historically it's been, you know, between  
20 50 and 60 percent. It's now down to 21 percent.  
21 21 percent. And localities make those decisions  
22 two and three years in advance. So if you're with  
23 the Roanoke area transit or Blacksburg and you  
24 plan ahead three years as a locality and say I'm

1 going to lay out \$600,000 for a new bus on the  
2 assumption I'll get half that back from the state,  
3 along comes where we are today, you only get 21  
4 percent.

5 That's very difficult for localities to  
6 work in that kind of a partnership arrangement.  
7 Coming back to the highway side, and this is kind  
8 of a simple number that explains where we are.  
9 What would it take to get this draft program that  
10 we are commenting on tonight back up to where we  
11 are today? 870 million over six years. And  
12 that's that combination of declining revenues and  
13 increasing costs.

14 These are the details by program. You can  
15 see the very large increase in federal earmarks,  
16 you can see the very large decreases in the  
17 primary and the secondary and urban systems. And  
18 incidently, urban and primary, those projects are  
19 chosen by your local governing bodies, but the  
20 reductions in those are about 40 percent for every  
21 locality. 40 percent.

22 To summarize, the program is shrinking, not  
23 growing. We have a set of rules that we operate  
24 under and there is wisdom in those rules, we

1           should not be rosy or optimistic in our forecasts,  
2           we must adopt it by July 1. The Commonwealth  
3           Transportation Board will act on this at their  
4           June meeting, I believe it's June 17 this is  
5           scheduled to be acted on, and the impacts will be  
6           felt the hardest at the local level.

7           So with that we will conclude that brief  
8           presentation and I will begin the public comment  
9           section and we would like to welcome Vice Mayor  
10          Bev Fitzpatrick to welcome us here to the region.  
11          Welcome, Mayor Fitzpatrick.

12          MR. FITZPATRICK: Mr. Secretary, I didn't  
13          know I would get to officially welcome you in  
14          Salem, I don't know if I have permission of the  
15          Salem mayor or not, but before I make my  
16          transportation comments let me tell you and the  
17          members of the CTB and staff how much we  
18          appreciate your taking the time to have these  
19          kinds of hearings across the Commonwealth.

20          I almost feel embarrassed even to come up  
21          here and suggesting that we don't like this and  
22          that we would like for you to do it differently,  
23          but I think it's important for you to know where  
24          we as localities are and where some of us looking

1 at the larger picture of Virginia would like to  
2 see us move in the long-term.

3 I come to you kind of with four positions.  
4 One, as Vice Mayor of the city. The second is  
5 Chair of the Virginia Municipal League  
6 Transportation Committee, the third is Co-chair of  
7 Virginians for Better Transportation, and lastly,  
8 as Vice Chairman of Valley Metro which you already  
9 alluded to is the Roanoke Valley's public transit  
10 system.

11 We obviously are very pleased with past  
12 allocations in the urban system, you take care of  
13 us in the year that we are talking about, but a 41  
14 percent reduction in allocations to the urban  
15 street program is going to really severely impact  
16 our ability to move our residents, to move our  
17 economic development activities, normally  
18 something, as you know all know, that we are 10 to  
19 20 years behind in any way.

20 We are really concerned that we are not  
21 going to meet the traffic goals, the economic  
22 development goals, the citizen goals and, more  
23 importantly, some of our industrial development  
24 prospect goals if this trend continues and we are

1 not able to get some relief from the General  
2 Assembly.

3 Just as importantly, it will curtail your  
4 ability to impact the interstate and primary  
5 system, which effects us primarily through 581 and  
6 220. We have got several interchanges, I won't  
7 mention them because Rich and his able staff are  
8 aware of them and have been working really well  
9 with us to try to move some of those forward, but  
10 it's really going to be crucial to an inner city,  
11 and any inner city that you all talk to, to  
12 maintain some level of transportation movement.

13 Usually we, whether we like it or not, are  
14 the capital city of Western Virginia, and many of  
15 those regions around us can either benefit or be  
16 hurt by our inability to be the leader and provide  
17 the right kind of infrastructure. Transportation,  
18 specifically access to 81, 581 and 220, is pretty  
19 crucial in that process.

20 Looking a little bit at public transit, you  
21 know, we are about at that point where we will  
22 have a crisis and people will start riding public  
23 transit to save money. At a time like this we can  
24 ill afford to cut it, we ought to be expanding it

1 and making it available to more people, and one of  
2 the things that bothers us the most, the public is  
3 saying they want more service now.

4 That's not a normal thing for the public in  
5 a community the size of Roanoke, but we are  
6 finding regional and statewide polls suggesting  
7 that, and the irony is many of the people who ride  
8 Valley Metro have that as their only source of  
9 getting to and from an appointment.

10 The cost to the Commonwealth of Virginia is  
11 far more if they go on unemployment and welfare  
12 than it would be for us to maintain that service.  
13 Without significant increases, as you well stated,  
14 Mr. Secretary, none of us are going to be able to  
15 meet the goals that we already had in mind in the  
16 six-year plan, and I think the most important  
17 thing, we might see service reductions here for  
18 the first time in decades if we are not able to  
19 change what appears to be the coming trend.

20 Our seniors use this service to shop a lot  
21 and, as I mentioned earlier, others use it for  
22 professional services, health care, getting to and  
23 from work, and we don't want them to lose those  
24 jobs.

1           We estimate that we can save up to \$6,500 a  
2           year by folks who commute each way. Obviously  
3           that's a whole lot of money, but it's lot more  
4           than a tax cut to those folks. And I think we are  
5           all concerned about the inaction by the General  
6           Assembly, we certainly know that they are in a  
7           bind, and it puts you all in a bind.

8           And rather than be critical of where we  
9           are, I would only ask that as a representative of  
10          the city and some folks across the state, that you  
11          all do your best to help the General Assembly  
12          understand the impact that this kind of cut and  
13          continuing to cut this would have without some  
14          kind of action on behalf of that body to move us  
15          forward.

16          We are particularly concerned that we will  
17          be doing maintenance only in a very short number  
18          of years, and if we are going to do things like  
19          the Heartland Corridor that the Governor and  
20          Wick Moorman talked about yesterday, you know,  
21          Southwest Virginia will be hurt significantly if  
22          we cannot connect that intermodal operation to 81  
23          in the most efficient way possible.

24          I think my greatest fear, looking larger

1           than the State of Virginia, it stands to be  
2           gridlocked, and the Port of Virginia won't be able  
3           to grow as we would like it to.

4           But let me thank each of you for what you  
5           do for the Commonwealth. I fear as an elected  
6           official that you don't hear that any more than we  
7           do. It is a great sacrifice of your time from  
8           your families and others to take the time to do  
9           this kind of thing.

10          So we ask as local governments that you  
11          please let us know if there is anything that we  
12          can do to support you, to help you, knowing that  
13          the General Assembly appoints you. You can't be  
14          but so blunt with them, and we understand that,  
15          but if we can be of help to you in any way I hope  
16          you will let us know, and once again we thank you  
17          for the opportunity.

18          MR. HOMER: Thank you, Mayor. The next  
19          speaker is Dave Morgan, to be followed by  
20          Joseph Paxton.

21          MR. MORGAN: Good evening. My name is  
22          David Morgan, I'm the General Manager of Greater  
23          Roanoke Transit Company. We are the public's  
24          transit provider for the Roanoke Valley and the



1 region.

2 We do operate Valley Metro, which is the  
3 local bus service, as well as the Smart Way Bus  
4 Service which operates between the New River  
5 Valley and the Roanoke Valley. And by the way,  
6 that is the only public transit land canal between  
7 the two regions.

8 Both of these services operate  
9 approximately from five a.m. to nine p.m., Monday  
10 through Saturday, and we are currently  
11 experiencing, compared to last year, ridership  
12 increases on Valley Metro of approximately 10  
13 percent, and Smart Way ridership increases of  
14 almost 35 percent.

15 Now, that sounds wonderful, but it falls  
16 very short of the demand that we are currently  
17 experiencing. For those folks who are finding  
18 employment opportunities on second and third  
19 shift, or even Sundays, they are having to reject  
20 those opportunities because of the lack of public  
21 transportation.

22 That leaves a certain segment of our  
23 community that are either underemployed or  
24 unemployed. In addition to the local demands, we

1 have regional demands, and we have heard requests  
2 from Bedford, Franklin County, Montgomery County  
3 and Radford, that they would like to get involved  
4 in public transportation.

5 In fact, the ridership and the demand for  
6 additional transit services is increased across  
7 the state, as you are well aware of. But at this  
8 time so is the operating costs for operating the  
9 transit service. The increase in the fuel, tires  
10 and parts can just no longer be postponed.

11 We have to find a solution to resolve those  
12 issues. We have approached the City of Roanoke in  
13 doing our budget preparation for next year and  
14 have requested a 20 percent increase in our  
15 investment from the locality. That is just to  
16 maintain the current level of service.

17 If we are unable to receive additional  
18 dollars from the state we will have no other  
19 choice but to reduce the level of service that we  
20 currently provide to the region.

21 So we come to you and ask on behalf of the  
22 6,500 passengers that we provide service for on a  
23 daily basis to work very closely with the General  
24 Assembly, to please try to find a long-term

1 financial solution to our current crisis. Thank  
2 you very much.

3 MR. HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Morgan. The  
4 next speaker is Joseph Paxton, to be followed by  
5 Lionel Toms.

6 MR. PAXTON: Thank you, Mr. Secretary,  
7 gentlemen. I appreciate the opportunity to come  
8 back home to Salem. I am currently the County  
9 Administrator of Rockingham County, but I grew up  
10 in the Roanoke Valley and Salem born and Salem  
11 bred, and so those of us that live around here,  
12 and the Mayor can tell you, that means I'll be  
13 Salem dead one of these days, but hopefully they  
14 will have roads to get me to where I need to go.

15 I come to talk to you tonight about the  
16 project up in the valley that the Secretary and  
17 the Commission know a lot about, but the other  
18 members on the Commonwealth Transportation Board  
19 may not, and that's the Port Republic Road  
20 project.

21 We are working closely with James Madison  
22 University and the Commonwealth to try and allow  
23 the Commonwealth to acquire the existing  
24 Rockingham Memorial Hospital property by moving

1           that hospital out into the county off of a road  
2           that's known as Port Republic Road.

3           The Commonwealth Transportation Board last  
4           year changed that road from a secondary road to a  
5           primary road. We have been working closely with  
6           some money that's currently in the budget to  
7           design a portion of that road that would start at  
8           the eastern city limits and run out to Boyers  
9           Road, which is just past the hospital property.

10          That work is underway, Garrett Moore and  
11          Don Camara up in that end of the valley are  
12          working real closely with us to try and work on  
13          that. We are also trying to help ourselves.

14          One of the things we have been hearing from  
15          the General Assembly is that localities have to  
16          step forward and developers have to step forward  
17          to help solve this road problem that we have in  
18          the Commonwealth, and we are working with  
19          developers in that area to try and get a connector  
20          road that will tie in with Port Republic Road and  
21          connect it over to Route 11 to the south and over  
22          to Route 33 to the north so that we can move traffic  
23          through that area, but we do need your help.

24          There is only planning money in for Port

1           Republic Road. There may be some money left over  
2           in the southeast connector study that already has  
3           General Assembly approval to shift over when and  
4           if the Commonwealth Transportation Board believes  
5           that those funds are actually available.

6           We want to make sure that study gets  
7           completed and then move those funds over, but it  
8           will not be enough to complete that road project.  
9           The hospital looks to open some time in 2009 or  
10          2010, which doesn't give us much time, and so  
11          anything that you can do once a budget is adopted,  
12          once we get more money for transportation, to  
13          allocate a portion of those to this project will  
14          be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

15          MR. HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Paxton. What is  
16          the total cost?

17          MR. PAXTON: About 24 million.

18          MR. HOMER: The next speaker is Mr. Lionel  
19          Toms. Welcome, Mr. Toms. And you will be  
20          followed by Carl Espy.

21          MR. TOMS: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. My  
22          name is Lionel W. Toms. Good evening, everyone.  
23          I'm here on the safety project of 122 and 24 south  
24          of Bedford County. This is the third phase that

1 will connect to be complete for this project, the  
2 number of 0024009118N501PPS67528.

3 I have had a lot of communications with I  
4 guess everybody up here. I haven't seen  
5 everybody. I met Mr. Homer tonight, this is the  
6 first time. I have seen him on computer, that's  
7 how I get to know these people some time, and I  
8 have seen a lot of these other people, too.  
9 Mr. Pete Sensabaugh, he makes things happen. I  
10 thank everyone that's helped me with this  
11 project.

12 The third phase has got to be fixed some  
13 time or the other. It's located in Bedford  
14 County, south of Bedford County. That's where my  
15 son was killed in 2002. September 10, 2002 he was  
16 killed out there at this death trap intersection.  
17 It was a death trap intersection.

18 It's safer, we have got two phases in out  
19 there now, but it's still a dangerous place on  
20 that southern part of 122. It's approaching the  
21 light from Moneta, Virginia. It's a dip, it's a  
22 poor eyesight, sight distance is bad. I have  
23 taken pictures of this thing and I have left  
24 copies and reports to Mr. Caywood to have this

1 looked at and corrected as soon as possible.

2 What happened out there was the approach of  
3 24 to 122 when my son was killed, it was at a bad  
4 angle. This lady failed to yield the right of way  
5 and she rammed in to and hit my son, then he went  
6 out of control and over the top of the guardrail  
7 out there and he got killed.

8 The third phase out there consists of  
9 raised grade, add left turn lanes, install  
10 permanent beam, that's with the steel columns that  
11 holds the light up across the road. Out there now  
12 it's poles and it's cable that holds it up. But  
13 anyway, that's with the concrete footings.

14 This is recommended by Mr. Caywood on a fax  
15 copy that I have got from Mrs. Debbie Sheinstein  
16 from the Bedford office. I filed 3,500 petitions  
17 for this back in 2003, and the taxpayers and the  
18 registered voters is the one that signed these  
19 things, and we are waiting. They are waiting on  
20 me and they are waiting on VDOT to get this done  
21 as soon as possible.

22 This is below the Moneta Rescue Squad south  
23 of the intersection of 122 and 24 like you head to  
24 Smith Mountain Lake south. Now, north is what we

1 are concerned with, because what they are doing,  
2 they are coming off the hill over there, on that  
3 far hill coming towards it, traveling north, the  
4 gravel trucks, the tractor trailers, all of these  
5 heavy pieces of equipment are coming off that hill  
6 too fast, more than 45 miles an hour, and I have  
7 been out there and took pictures to watch to see  
8 what they are doing.

9 They are going too fast and when they get  
10 up there to the light if it turns yellow they run  
11 the red light, and it's got strobes and everything  
12 in the red light, and I'm afraid somebody else is  
13 going to get killed there because they are not  
14 yielding and then they are getting in too big a  
15 hurry to make that grade. That's the reason the  
16 dip needs to be elevated up so they can have good  
17 sight distance.

18 I have sent letters to Governor Kaine on  
19 this, registered letters, make sure he got it, and  
20 Mr. Pierce Homer, I have sent letters to you, too,  
21 the Secretary of Transportation. The results of  
22 these letters, they end up back in the Salem  
23 district. I don't know what the situation is  
24 there. I don't know that you got a copy of that



1 registered letter or not, but anyway, it was sent  
2 to you.

3 Mr. Pete Sensabaugh, I have to commend him  
4 very highly for helping me with this project on  
5 the start. This was 2003 when I carried those  
6 petitions to Christiansburg High School back in  
7 2003. Him and Mr. Sutton, Mrs. Debbie Sheinstein,  
8 Mr. Rob Curry, I will have to recognize him,  
9 too, because I think he's working with Mr. Pete  
10 Sensabaugh in this district.

11 Mr. Bob Yates, I don't know whether he's  
12 here tonight or not, but anyway, he's helped me a  
13 lot with this thing, too, on the lighting and the  
14 sign situation over there.

15 I hope everyone understands, one life saved  
16 at this old death trap intersection has paid to  
17 make it safer, and anyone who travels through it  
18 for now or the future. That's the reason that I  
19 want to complete this. I don't like to start  
20 anything and not try to complete it.

21 The people out there, I had petitions all  
22 sides of the county, east, west, north, south,  
23 Bedford County, concerning this thing, and of  
24 course that was the only thing I knew to do to

1 make it safer for everybody that travels through  
2 there and hope they don't have to get the phone  
3 call I did and go through what I went through.

4 I hope the budget will soon be settled at  
5 Richmond so VDOT can go on with the safety  
6 projects and other needs. I know it's a bad  
7 situation, I know things cost, I know what these  
8 gentlemen just said, I know exactly what they are  
9 talking about.

10 I mean everybody drives a car or tractor  
11 trailer, owns a tractor trailer company or  
12 whatever, they are fighting a whole lot of  
13 expense. I know everything has gone sky high.

14 I just want to get this thing, try to put  
15 it in the six-year plan if I can, and I will have  
16 to commend my supervisors, Mr. Chuck Newdoffer,  
17 Mr. Roger Cheek, Mr. Steve Arrington, Ms. Kathleen  
18 Guzi, all these people work as team work, team  
19 effort, to help with the situation. Especially  
20 VDOT.

21 My legislators did not help me with this.  
22 I went to all of them, four of them, to try to get  
23 help with funds to get this completed and help you  
24 all with it, but I didn't get no help, but you all

1                   helped me. The VDOT helped me with this.

2                   MR. HOMER: Mr. Toms, could I ask you to  
3                   sum up?

4                   MR. TOMS: Okay. This concludes my request  
5                   and reports on the safety project at 122 and 24  
6                   intersection, and I yield my time to the next  
7                   speaker. Thank you.

8                   MR. HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Toms.

9                   MR. TOMS: Yes, sir.

10                  MR. HOMER: We do appreciate the very hard  
11                  work and your loss.

12                  MR. TOMS: Well, I'm just trying to make it  
13                  safer for everybody concerned and I yield my time  
14                  to the next speaker.

15                  MR. HOMER: Thank you. The next speaker is  
16                  Mr. Carl Espy, to be followed by Chad Hood.  
17                  Welcome, Mr. Espy.

18                  MR. ESPY: Thank you, Secretary Homer and  
19                  Commissioner Whirley, I appreciate the opportunity  
20                  to come before you. I'm Carl Espy, I'm the Town  
21                  Manager of Halifax, and I know this is a very  
22                  important process when you hear the critical and  
23                  crucial needs of the communities and individuals  
24                  in terms of transportation and safety enhancement.

1 I first wanted to state that coming from  
2 south side Virginia I talked to our resident  
3 engineer Joe Barkley earlier this morning. I  
4 asked Joe if he would be coming to this meeting.  
5 I'm glad Tom is here, Tom Ramey, the district  
6 administrator.

7 Joe said he would not be able to make it.  
8 We are in the process of the budget for the Town  
9 of Halifax so I thought this was a good opportunity  
10 to get out of town and not return my calls to our  
11 finance committee promptly, so hopefully, I know  
12 it pales in comparison to what you are up against  
13 in Richmond, but our council will have everything  
14 worked out for us by the time I get back.

15 First I just wanted to thank the CTB for  
16 the enhancement allocation that we received for  
17 our downtown revitalization project, this would be  
18 for pedestrian improvements in the courthouse  
19 area, this is the second allocation that we have  
20 received, and we do feel that pedestrian safety  
21 and the interaction of vehicular traffic and  
22 creating a walkable, sustainable community is a  
23 high priority for us.

24 This is going to be leveraged with \$770,000

1 community block grant dollars, in addition to  
2 approximately \$400,000 in local and private match,  
3 too, so we really are trying to do the best with  
4 the seed money that we have been able to receive  
5 from the CTB. This all started with the planning  
6 grant back in 2002. And that has helped the town  
7 I think begin to re-invigorate our Planning  
8 Commission, we are currently reviewing our  
9 comprehensive plan which we plan to adopt within  
10 the next three months.

11 And we have actually hired Hill Studio out  
12 of Roanoke to work with us on this plan which has  
13 really not been reviewed and comprehensively  
14 updated since 1977. So we are trying to address  
15 the transportation needs, looking at land use,  
16 where we could develop harmonization with our land  
17 use, and also recreational greenway opportunities  
18 where we have alternatives to vehicular  
19 transportation.

20 What I wanted to really come here to  
21 specifically talk about is what is in the draft  
22 budget, and that is the Route 360 bridge  
23 replacement over the Bannister River. This is in  
24 the northern gateway of our town and our

1 community, and in our very intensive public  
2 workshops back in the fall of 2005 we hired Draper  
3 Aden & Associates and their transportation  
4 engineer Tom Flynn, along with Michael Waldrop  
5 with Waldrop & Street Design, to get a sense of  
6 how the community wanted to see itself develop.

7 We are a small rural village, but we also  
8 are at the intersection of Virginia 360 and  
9 U.S. 501, so an intersection that was created back  
10 in the stage coach days many of us say, and of  
11 course there is a tremendous volume of traffic  
12 there now.

13 As a result of that, the community really  
14 desired to see that roundabouts be introduced for  
15 traffic calming as opposed to signalization and  
16 intersections, and it was suggested by Joe Barkley  
17 that the proposed replacement of the 360 bridge  
18 would be an opportunity to marry these two  
19 projects at the intersection of 360 and 501 since  
20 they are in close proximity, and I think that that  
21 could be done under the current budget and with  
22 the partnerships that we are developing with our  
23 transportation assistants and engineering and  
24 design.

1                   There would also be the opportunity for  
2                   improved curb, gutter and sidewalks in the  
3                   proposed bridge replacement area, and this is a  
4                   historic area of the town close to the river but  
5                   has been I think neglected over the past few  
6                   decades, it's primarily low to moderate income  
7                   individuals who have not had any of these types of  
8                   necessary improvements, and of course with goods  
9                   and services closer by I think that walking would  
10                  be a safer alternative for them as well.

11                 The roundabout notion I think is being used  
12                 I think in the Salem district, and I appreciate  
13                 the CTB's responses on this because I believe that  
14                 through Tom Ramey and Robert Pierce we see that we  
15                 can work with VDOT on looking into this.

16                 I know that there was the Gibbons Lane and  
17                 I think Progress Street project which is actually  
18                 a VDOT project if I'm not mistaken, which is a  
19                 design build, so we think there could be the same  
20                 opportunities to merge those too.

21                 The main aspect of the bridge that we also  
22                 want to keep VDOT in mind is if we are looking at  
23                 construction in 2009 through 2011, and if in fact  
24                 the preliminary engineering and right of way is

1           currently under way as evidenced on your Web page,  
2           the 360, that section of 360 is part of a  
3           nominated scenic byway now.

4           I was happy to get Commissioner Whirley's  
5           notification of that, so there are 42 miles of  
6           rural roadways which would include this section of  
7           the Bannister River bridge, and so I think in the  
8           design phase of that we would be replacing a 1920s  
9           truss bridge, so I think there would be some  
10          opportunity to make sure that aesthetically it's  
11          compatible.

12          We are also going to be working with the  
13          Department of Historic Resources and would like  
14          the opportunity to work with VDOT on this because  
15          there are a number of historic assets along the  
16          river corridor and opportunity to work with our  
17          greenway program, so we just appreciate the  
18          opportunity and hope that the funding will  
19          continue for this particular project.

20          MR. HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Espy. The  
21          next speaker is Chad Hood, to be followed by  
22          Nancy Sorrells. Welcome, Mr. Hood.

23          MR. HOOD: Thank you. I'm here  
24          representing Scott County Board of Supervisors



1           tonight. We have several concerns that we want to  
2           talk about.

3           To begin with, VDOT's proposal of the 11 to  
4           15 billion dollar proposal in the Star System. We  
5           feel like there are several problems with that  
6           proposal. One is the major expense of the  
7           program. Our primary roads in our area are  
8           already suffering and the secondary systems are  
9           really suffering.

10          Also, another problem we have with the Star  
11          System is the major traffic that it's going to  
12          incur. You are going to have a lot of freight,  
13          it's going to be dangerous, a lot more pollution,  
14          just various things. So we are more supportive of  
15          the rail system in Scott County as opposed to the  
16          Star System.

17          Now I'm going to talk about several things  
18          in the secondary road system. I'm going to give  
19          you a lot of numbers here so just bear with me.  
20          Starting in 2002 the secondary construction  
21          allocation for Scott County was 18.7 million and  
22          it was reduced to 11.2 million due to a 40 percent  
23          reduction in funding, and that reduced our program  
24          by 7.5 million that year.

1                   In 2005 the secondary construction  
2                   allocation of 12.6 million was reduced to  
3                   9 million due to a 29 percent reduction in  
4                   funding, reducing Scott County's secondary  
5                   construction program by 3.6 million. And this  
6                   year the secondary construction allocation is  
7                   scheduled to be reduced from 11.6 to 6.8 million,  
8                   which will reduce Scott County's secondary  
9                   construction program by 4.7 million.

10                  This year VACO was anticipating an  
11                  allocation of two million, however, a 41 percent  
12                  reduction will give an allocation of 1.2 million  
13                  dollars, reducing the allocation by \$850,000.  
14                  Comparing the original allocation of 2002 of 18.7  
15                  million dollars to the proposed reduced allocation  
16                  of this year, which is 6.8 million, there has been  
17                  an overall reduction of 64 percent in Scott County  
18                  secondary construction program over a six year  
19                  span.

20                  And some other relevant facts to Scott  
21                  County, there is approximately 700 miles of  
22                  secondary roads in Scott County. Of these 700  
23                  miles, there is 296 miles of unpaved secondary  
24                  roads. Of the 296 miles of unpaved secondary

1 roads, approximately 161 miles are eligible to be  
2 paved.

3 Now, in 2002 the secondary roadway average  
4 cost of widening and pave was \$270,000. This year  
5 in 2006 it's \$350,000. So do you understand the  
6 problem we are having in Scott County? I mean we  
7 have got a lot of unpaved roads that are in need  
8 of pavement but with the current numbers we are  
9 getting, you know, it's looking pretty grim.

10 I have also got this down. According to  
11 the working draft of 2007 to 2012, the six year  
12 improvement program maintenance is the largest  
13 budget item with 42 percent of all six year  
14 revenues. Is that correct?

15 MR. HOMER: Yes, sir.

16 MR. HOOD: Okay. According to the fiscal  
17 year 2006 business plan update VDOT's 3.8 billion  
18 dollar budget, approximately 580 million dollars,  
19 or 13 percent, was not out sourced, it was done in  
20 VDOT service, right?

21 MR. HOMER: Approximately.

22 MR. HOOD: Okay. 2.6 billion dollars of  
23 the 3.8 billion dollars was given to the private  
24 sector, which that's 68 percent of that total

1 fund. In my opinion maintenance does eat up much  
2 of the budget due to privatization.

3 Is there an accurate record of tracking  
4 costs of services provided by contractors? And I  
5 just want to know, I just want somebody to show me  
6 how you are actually tracking these figures that  
7 these contractors are doing because I don't think  
8 privatization is the way we need to go.

9 We are just looking for real answers for  
10 real solutions. The proposed budget for 2007  
11 through 2012 is not really realistic, especially  
12 to us in Scott County. The Scott County Board of  
13 Supervisors, we have written our Delegate Kilgore,  
14 Senator Wampler and Governor Kaine to address  
15 these budget issues in Scott County and  
16 Southwestern Virginia, but it seems that they are  
17 falling on deaf ears.

18 Our legislators and governor must honor the  
19 route VDOT is heading or the jobs of VDOT  
20 employees or taxpayers money will be utterly  
21 wasted. Not only is the situation dire for many  
22 VDOT employees, but for the taxpaying citizens of  
23 Virginia.

24 You know, I just want to tell you guys, you

1 know, we are in a real different situation,  
2 especially in Scott County, especially with all  
3 the, you know, secondary road projects that we  
4 need to have funding. So I just want to thank you  
5 for giving me time to speak with you guys and  
6 appreciate it.

7 MR. HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Hood. Could you  
8 provide that data to us that talk about the  
9 six-year program and reduction to Mr. Gibbons who  
10 is here, he might be able to capsulize that. I  
11 think that's important information and it tells an  
12 important story.

13 The next speaker is Nancy, is it Sorrells  
14 or Sorrells?

15 MS. SORRELLS: Sorrells.

16 MR. HOMER: Sorrells, excuse me. And she's  
17 going to be followed by Jerryanne Bier.

18 MS. SORRELLS: Good evening.

19 MR. HOMER: Welcome, Ms. Sorrells.

20 MS. SORRELLS: Thank you. I'm  
21 Nancy Sorrells, I'm the Vice Chair of the Augusta  
22 County Board of Supervisors. The Board and I  
23 appreciate the opportunity to participate in the  
24 preparation of the fiscal year 2006-7 allocation

1 program for interstate, primary and urban  
2 highways.

3 Augusta County has benefited from the many  
4 highway improvements VDOT has carried out in the  
5 past. We appreciate the state's decision to  
6 include in the six-year plan funding for  
7 engineering, right of way construction of the I-64  
8 bridge widening at Route 285, which is Exit 91 at  
9 Fishersville, and I might add that this is the  
10 site of our regional hospital, and during that  
11 dozen years or so that that hospital has been in  
12 place we have continued to expand the hospital  
13 with state-of-the-art medical technology,  
14 including a new regional cancer wing, so this is  
15 our top priority for our projects.

16 Our county is large and diverse and the  
17 road system is vitally important to our well-being  
18 and future economic health. We have enjoyed  
19 substantial industrial and business growth in  
20 recent years and we anticipate more growth in the  
21 future. The highway system is one of the major  
22 reasons that we have a healthy local economy.

23 Our board and staff have reviewed your  
24 current program and ask that you continue to

1 advance the following projects in Augusta County.  
2 I-81 widening and improvements where needed,  
3 Route 340 and I-64 signal off ramp, I-64 bridge  
4 widening off Route 285, which I just mentioned,  
5 Route 11 widening and improvements, again where  
6 needed.

7 We request that you add the following  
8 projects to the state's primary road funding list.  
9 Route 254 from Staunton to Route 42 at Buffalo  
10 Gap. This is a relatively narrow road with  
11 considerable traffic. We would like it improved  
12 with horizontal and vertical alignment meeting  
13 today's standards. This section of road services  
14 Beverly Manor Elementary School and Beverly Manor  
15 Middle School, along with Craigsville and the  
16 state's Augusta Correctional facility.

17 Also, Route 250 west of Staunton and  
18 Route 42 north of Churchville, Route 11 north from  
19 Verona to Route 256, Route 340 from Greenville to  
20 Route 654, and the Route 358 entrance to the  
21 Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center.

22 The Route 11 and Route 340 projects would  
23 assist the state in diverting traffic from I-81  
24 and I-64 when accidents or road conditions result

1 in closing sections of the interstate. We have  
2 interest also in the street and highway systems in  
3 Staunton and Waynesboro and support their efforts.

4 Our requests and those of the cities are  
5 coordinated and we continue to work together to  
6 provide an efficient road system for all the  
7 citizens of the region. We would request that  
8 VDOT's rural planning process be re-evaluated to  
9 afford counties the same opportunity for planning  
10 as cities now have.

11 Additionally, we support the Town of  
12 Craigsville's request that VDOT upgrade Route 42  
13 through the town to address transportation and  
14 drainage problems. We in Augusta County know and  
15 understand the importance of highway  
16 transportation.

17 We have committed our revenue sharing money  
18 in the past to highway construction, have included  
19 in our budget one million dollars for fiscal year  
20 2005/2006 for highway improvements in our county.  
21 We have enjoyed a good relationship with the  
22 department from the residency level on up and hope  
23 to continue that.

24 Our efforts to successfully implement the



1 rural rustic roads program is an excellent example  
2 of our cooperative and collaborative efforts.

3 In summary, on behalf of the Augusta County  
4 I just thank you for your work in our area.  
5 Please continue your efforts on the projects  
6 already in your program and we respectfully  
7 request that you add improvements noted in your  
8 fiscal year 2006/2007 primary program. Thank you.

9 MR. HOMER: Thank you, Ms. Sorrells. The  
10 next speaker is Jerryanne Bier.

11 MS. BIER: Bier.

12 MR. HOMER: Bier. To be followed by  
13 Lee Ann Carr. Welcome, Ms. Bier.

14 MS. BIER: Hi, gentlemen, and thanks for  
15 the opportunity, it's always encouraging that--  
16 I'm a private citizen, speaking from that  
17 perspective, that we have an opportunity to let  
18 the folks' decision makers know how we feel and  
19 questions we have about the projects.

20 I would simply like to talk about I-81,  
21 I-73 and a few words about U.S. 220. I'm not sure  
22 how I-81 fits into the six-year plan. I find the  
23 document a little bit hard to understand and so  
24 on, but I do know that it's certainly front and

1 center in what's happening with transportation  
2 resources and planning for the future.

3 And I really feel that the whole process  
4 that's been taking place with I-81 has really  
5 been, well, backwards in terms of the  
6 environmental study and having a solution before  
7 the environmental study was finished.

8 And I know all that's been addressed very  
9 eloquently in a lot of the hearings, but I would  
10 just hope when citizens and municipalities all  
11 along the corridor, of the effected corridor, are  
12 crying out for more prominent rail solution and  
13 specific targeted improvements to address  
14 realistic transportation needs, current and  
15 future, I can only hope that, you know, the CTB  
16 and all the folks responsible for decision making  
17 will truly listen to those who are going to be  
18 effected.

19 In terms of I-73, that's kind of not been  
20 high profile lately, but I would raise questions  
21 in terms of the six-year plan because of those two  
22 earmarks, you know, and I don't understand how  
23 things like this work because here you have an  
24 earmark for construction in the Martinsville area

1           when the final EIS isn't even been put out yet, no  
2           record of decision on I-73, and here you have  
3           something that is earmarked for construction  
4           funds.

5                     Same with the right of way earmark for  
6           Roanoke County. And to me having that even in the  
7           plan, because it seems that there is a mandate for  
8           match money, is totally out of line. Why are we  
9           even thinking about dedicating money, state money,  
10          for something that is-- well, the whole project  
11          seems a little pie in the sky, but it seems to me  
12          that the federal mandate or earmarks for those two  
13          projects are really driving something that the  
14          Commonwealth citizens aren't going to benefit  
15          from, and it's detracting from using that resource  
16          in another manner.

17                    So essentially what I would like to see  
18          happen in terms of I-73 is that for it to be  
19          revisited by the CTB and let's have some closure  
20          to those folks who have been in the approved  
21          location corridor who have been hanging out for  
22          announcement five years since the release of the  
23          DEIS.

24                    There is a lot issues still outstanding in

1 terms of access to the Blue Ridge Parkway through  
2 Roanoke County, the law endangered Roanoke Log  
3 Perch. Lots of things that are hanging out. I  
4 would like to see the CTB revisit I-73 and look at  
5 a total upgrade of U.S. 220. Federal funds are  
6 available for that.

7 That's what the I-73 money and high  
8 priority could be dedicated to, changing over to  
9 the U.S. 220 upgrade, and that's been a story  
10 that's been going on for many years and it's  
11 really not fair to hold all those folks in the  
12 approved location corridor hostage to something  
13 that's not going to-- who knows if-- it's just not  
14 realistic.

15 And finally, I had a lot of questions about  
16 the U.S. 220 project, but with the thanks to  
17 Rob Carey who has been very, very helpful over the  
18 past several years, because I have had lots of  
19 inquiries and made perhaps a lot of demands in  
20 terms of wondering what's happening, you know,  
21 there is money moved from I-73 to improvements to  
22 U.S. 220 and it seemed things were slow in coming,  
23 but he has explained to me some of the projects  
24 that are underway.

1           They are identified in the six-year plan, I  
2           just hope they happen. I understand, too, that  
3           they are very small things, but everything  
4           matters, and whether it's lighting, whether it's  
5           signage, whether it's, you know, the lines on the  
6           side of the road, all those crossovers, and I-73  
7           was supposedly happening for safety, to alleviate  
8           the safety issues on U.S. 220.

9           Again, going back to that, if we could  
10          dedicate more money to do a really good job  
11          instead of having to pinch and scrimp, but I  
12          certainly support all those little things as  
13          well. So, thank you very much.

14          MR. HOMER: Thank you, Ms. Bier. The next  
15          speaker is Lee Ann Carr, to be followed by  
16          Delegate Morgan Griffith.

17          MS. CARR: Good evening, Secretary,  
18          Gentlemen. My name is Lee Ann Carr and I'm the  
19          Executive Director of the Bedford Area Chamber of  
20          Commerce. We appreciate the opportunity to  
21          address you this evening and want you to know that  
22          we appreciate the important place on remembering  
23          rural Virginia when planning how to spend our  
24          transportation dollar.

1           It's particularly disturbing to come here  
2           this evening and hear about the cuts to public  
3           transportation, particularly in light of the  
4           rising gas prices. Bedford city and county  
5           represents one of the largest geographic areas in  
6           the state of Virginia without any type of public  
7           transportation.

8           Lack of public transportation has a variety  
9           of implications in our community, including but  
10          not limited to the following. Lack of  
11          transportation for our work force, which would be  
12          helpful for hourly employees and local businesses,  
13          particularly in view of our low unemployment rate  
14          and, again, the increase in gas prices.

15          Lack of transportation options for an aging  
16          population that is increasingly dependent upon our  
17          neighbors and friends for grocery shopping, access  
18          to public services which are often only offered in  
19          our surrounding communities of Lynchburg and  
20          Roanoke.

21          Lack of transportation for our children who  
22          are unable to participate in after school  
23          activities because their parents work in Lynchburg  
24          and Roanoke and after school bus service does not

1 extend to their area. Finally, lack of service  
2 for our citizens who do not drive and need access  
3 to medical care.

4 Currently Bedford Ride provides a service  
5 on a volunteer basis, but this year \$60,000 of  
6 their annual \$120,000 budget was cut on a federal  
7 level and that seriously threatens this primarily  
8 volunteer run program. We would like to encourage  
9 you to fund a Cap supported feasibility study  
10 grant to help us determine how we could best  
11 provide community transportation for the Bedford  
12 community.

13 Other topics that represent a priority for  
14 our Chamber included support of Bedford County  
15 road priorities with special emphasis on the  
16 importance of keeping 221 in the six-year plan, and  
17 we also encourage you to support Mr. Tom's request  
18 as that represents significant safety issues.

19 We are here tonight, too, to support the  
20 City of Bedford's priorities with particular  
21 emphasis on the improvements to Link Road and  
22 Route 714 from Highway 460 to the corporate  
23 limits.

24 The priority is particularly important for

1           the following reasons: Safety issues, high  
2           traffic volume, narrow lane widths, current  
3           geometry, specifically the curve at Smith Street,  
4           and enable the City of Bedford to realize  
5           significant economic benefit. So we have to keep  
6           that in mind.

7           We appreciate the difficult job that you  
8           have in utilizing an ever shrinking pool of money  
9           and thank you for the opportunity to speak.

10          MR. HOMER: Thank you, Ms. Carr. The next  
11          speaker is Delegate Morgan Griffith. Welcome,  
12          Delegate Griffith.

13          MR. GRIFFITH: Thank you very much and I  
14          appreciate you being here within walking distance  
15          of my house and not too far from where Joe Paxton  
16          and I grew up about a block and a-half apart from  
17          each other. Joe was maybe a year ahead of me in  
18          school, but it was good to see him this evening  
19          and that was an extra bonus for being here.

20          Let me say first off that I know you all  
21          have to deal with what's on the table at this  
22          point, that's a difficult job. Before July 1 I am  
23          confident that you will have money, some money,  
24          and before the end of the year I think that you



1 will see that you will have additional money and  
2 possibly and probably new sources of revenues  
3 dedicated.

4 The Governor and the Senate may not agree  
5 with me, I think that will be probably from some  
6 existing sources. But the bottom line is we will  
7 attempt to get additional money for  
8 transportation.

9 I was a little bit sorry that I didn't know  
10 about yesterday's announcement. When I first ran  
11 for office back in 1993 I laid out an economic  
12 development plan for the Roanoke Valley. Step one  
13 was to make sure that the preferred route for I-73  
14 came through the Roanoke Valley. In 1993 that was  
15 not the case. We can check that.

16 Step two was secure an intermodal facility  
17 for the Roanoke Valley. It looks like the  
18 Governor is leading with Norfolk Southern,  
19 something I have talked with, who was then when I  
20 started talking with him, when he was secretary,  
21 in your shoes, Martinez, but I'm glad that his  
22 work behind the scenes and the Governor's work  
23 look like they are going to bring that second item  
24 in to play.

1           I will tell you while I think we need to  
2           make sure that the other two are well on the way  
3           down the road before we do number three, the third  
4           planning of that program that I outlined would be  
5           to come in and do what I called the dry land  
6           port.

7           Everybody always got confused with that  
8           title so let me explain it. What that would have  
9           been and what I think should be built in the  
10          future is a series of warehouses close to each  
11          other for start-up distribution companies so that  
12          you would create basically a shell community for  
13          start-up companies.

14          I think you have to have intermodal first,  
15          I think you have to have I-73 further down the  
16          path than it is now, but that was the 30 or 50  
17          year plan that I laid out. We are a little over  
18          10 years past that now, but it looks like we are  
19          moving as a state in the right direction to what I  
20          believe will secure the Roanoke Valley and the New  
21          River Valley economically.

22          Most important, as always, and when I come  
23          to these I try to lay out what I think is most  
24          important because I know that no matter how much

1 money we might put together between now and the  
2 end of the year you can't fund everything in the  
3 next two or three years or even six years that  
4 might be necessary in the Roanoke Valley.

5 So my wish list still at the very top is 11  
6 and 460 west of Salem. As I have indicated to you  
7 all before when I have come to talk to you, I  
8 believe that is imperative before you to do any  
9 repairs, improvements, et cetera, to 81 in this  
10 region because as you close down lanes you are  
11 going to push traffic of different volumes and  
12 different times of the day and night on to  
13 Route 11, particularly between Christiansburg and  
14 the City of Salem, and you have that bottleneck.  
15 That would be a real problem at certain times of  
16 the day.

17 I think that's step number one, not a huge  
18 project, but something that absolutely needs to be  
19 done. I-73 I have already mentioned. Obviously  
20 widening I-81, I have been and remain supportive  
21 of Star Solutions. A lot of people don't agree  
22 with me on that, but I am supportive because they  
23 have the only plan that I think when you are  
24 looking at transportation, as you all well know,

1           you are not looking at the next two years as I  
2           have heard so many times this year, you are  
3           looking at 30 to 50 years, and I believe we will  
4           need the four lanes on 81.

5           They have the only plan that is out there,  
6           and you all have embraced components of that, and  
7           I appreciate that, that will build 81 looking to  
8           the future, taking care of today's needs but also  
9           the future. Obviously rail is also a component of  
10          that, we have to be mindful of that.

11          So 11, 460 west of Salem, 81, I-73. There  
12          are always pie in the sky projects that people  
13          want. I think that as Salem continues to grow, as  
14          there continues to be development just outside of  
15          Salem and Roanoke County, an additional bridge  
16          across the Roanoke River into the southern part of  
17          Salem and serve Salem and parts of west Roanoke  
18          County is probably going to move up the list.  
19          It's not on there yet, but probably ought to be  
20          something that we are looking forward to in the  
21          future.

22          221 in southwest Roanoke County, also very  
23          important, but it's kind of the tar baby of our  
24          road situations here because it's environmentally

1 sensitive. You know, you have to figure out a way  
2 to work it and I think the best we can do is to  
3 try to slide out some curves in the short run.  
4 Your folks have been working it, but just keep it  
5 on the radar screen.

6 That being said, I appreciate you all being  
7 here. I wish you all well in your travels home.  
8 When I leave I drive approximately four or five  
9 blocks, I could walk but dinner is waiting and I  
10 won't do that, but if I can ever be of service  
11 don't hesitate to contact me.

12 We may disagree from time to time, but the  
13 door is always open. Thank you very much for  
14 being here.

15 MR. HOMER: Thank you for taking the time  
16 to be with us, Delegate Griffith. Sorry you  
17 couldn't be with us, it was a great announcement  
18 yesterday.

19 MR. GRIFFITH: Sometimes these things  
20 happen.

21 MR. HOMER: Yes, sir.

22 MR. GRIFFITH: And I would say to you that  
23 the Joint Legislative Auto Review Commission was  
24 meeting in Richmond so I would have had to try to

1 figure out how to be in two places at one time,  
2 and I don't know, this is such an important  
3 project for the Roanoke Valley, for the economic  
4 health long after I'm no longer in office, for  
5 jobs, for my children and grandchildren, and I  
6 think it's a big deal.

7 So I'm just tickled pink it's coming, I'm  
8 tickled pink that Governor Kaine has fully  
9 endorsed it and I will do whatever I can to help  
10 him in acquiring the necessary funds to make that  
11 project reality.

12 MR. HOMER: Thank you. The next speaker is  
13 Mr. Steve Chapin, to be followed by Kathleen Guzi.

14 MR. CHAPIN: Good evening, gentlemen, my  
15 name is Steve Chapin and this evening I'm  
16 representing the Roanoke Regional Chamber of  
17 Commerce. I deal with 1,500 businesses and tens  
18 of thousands of employees centered around the  
19 Roanoke Valley.

20 I realize and understand the challenges the  
21 Commonwealth faces in addressing our  
22 transportation needs, and please know that the  
23 Governor's efforts in addressing these needs are  
24 very much appreciated. His efforts to travel

1 across the Commonwealth multiple times are greatly  
2 appreciated.

3 I have been coming before this group now  
4 for about 10 years presenting the needs of the  
5 Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce and the needs  
6 of the Roanoke Valley. Three projects have  
7 continually been on our list. One is Route 58.  
8 We appreciate that construction on Route 58 has  
9 progressed and we ask you to stick with that  
10 project until all of Route 58 is improved in  
11 southwest and south side Virginia.

12 Also on the list is Interstate 73. Safety  
13 on Route 220 is a huge concern, traveling between  
14 the Roanoke Valley and Martinsville. We ask you  
15 not to forget about Interstate 73 in your plans  
16 for the future. And number one on our list,  
17 probably for about the last 15 plus years, is  
18 Interstate 81.

19 And please remember, I guess everything  
20 that can be said about 81 has been said, but  
21 please remember that improving 81 is all about  
22 improving the quality of life for the citizens of  
23 Western Virginia. It's a matter of safety, it's a  
24 matter of reliability, whether you are traveling

1 I-81 for purposes of business or recreation.

2 And we also ask you to focus on a long-term  
3 solution so that once construction is completed,  
4 whatever happens on 81, that the process does not  
5 have to start again and that we have a solution  
6 that will serve generations to come in Western  
7 Virginia.

8 And on a personal note I would like to  
9 thank all of you for the efforts that you make to  
10 make Virginia a better place to live and I would  
11 also like to acknowledge the great staff that VDOT  
12 has in the Salem district, Lynchburg, Staunton and  
13 Bristol, you really have some good, dedicated  
14 individuals working in those districts and  
15 throughout the Commonwealth.

16 In closing, again, I remind you that  
17 improving Interstate 81 is all about improving the  
18 quality of life for all citizens of Western  
19 Virginia. Thank you, gentlemen.

20 MR. HOMER: Thank you, Mr. Chapin. The  
21 next speaker is Kathleen Guzi.

22 MS. GUZI: Guzi.

23 MR. HOMER: Guzi, excuse me.

24 MS. GUZI: No problem.



1 MR. HOMER: Who will be followed by  
2 Joyce Waugh.

3 MS. GUZI: Thank you, Mr. Secretary, and  
4 gentlemen. I am Kathleen Guzi, I am County  
5 Administrator in Bedford, so I'm here tonight  
6 representing the Board of Supervisors.

7 You heard Delegate Griffith earlier talk  
8 about some possible projects that may be  
9 considered pie in the sky. Well, I'm here tonight  
10 to talk about projects that are real, that you  
11 have started and that we need to continue moving.

12 So with that said I want to first thank you  
13 for all of your support in the past for not only  
14 the roads in Bedford County, but also all the  
15 roads in Commonwealth. However, as we all agree  
16 tonight, there is much more to be done.

17 I'm sure, as you are aware, Bedford County  
18 is the fifth largest county in land area in the  
19 Commonwealth. Also, we are the fastest growing  
20 locality in the Salem highway district and also  
21 the fastest growing locality in the Commonwealth  
22 west of the I-95 corridor, and we have been for  
23 the past 20 years.

24 Our fastest growing area is up in the

1 Forest area and Route 221. You have been  
2 extremely helpful in getting the funding for that  
3 project to widen the roads, to provide the  
4 signalization where needed to help us deal with  
5 our growth. That project is near the end of the  
6 current phase and any continued funding that you  
7 can put for this project to keep it moving would  
8 be greatly appreciated.

9 MR. HOMER: I'm sorry, what was that route  
10 number?

11 MS. GUZI: Route 221 up in the Forest area.  
12 Next, Route 24, you have previously completed  
13 several different phases of 24. We are asking for  
14 the next phase to be started and funding. This  
15 project was in the original draft plan, but due to  
16 the budget constraints it has been removed at this  
17 time.

18 If as Delegate Griffith stated that  
19 additional funding may be secured in this next  
20 fiscal year we would greatly appreciate putting  
21 that project back in the plan because it was in  
22 your original draft plan.

23 Following that I would like to echo the  
24 comments you heard earlier from Mr. Toms in terms

1 of the safety improvements needed at the Route 122  
2 and 24 corridor. I will not repeat what Mr. Toms  
3 said, but obviously there are safety concerns  
4 there, you have made some improvements, but we  
5 need to continue working with our resident  
6 engineer and the district to continue and complete  
7 those improvements.

8 Along those lines, we are well aware of the  
9 fact that there is a push now to make sure that we  
10 coordinate land use and our road transportation  
11 issues. With that we would like to thank  
12 Mr. Caywood who has been very helpful in starting  
13 a corridor study for our whole Route 122 corridor.  
14 However, we want to make sure that that funding  
15 continues for the planning process and then once  
16 the plan hopefully is adopted then we can move  
17 forward with construction.

18 And then finally, last but not least,  
19 Route 501. Again, this is a major safety issue.  
20 Again, previously you have funded some safety  
21 improvements there, but the 501 Corridor  
22 Coalition, which is made up of several localities,  
23 has adopted 10 key priorities that will include  
24 that stretch of 501 that is used not only by

1 residents but many, many businesses in the  
2 Commonwealth and is a crucial route, especially  
3 for some of the lumbering and wood product  
4 companies, so any funding you can give to the  
5 Route 501 safety improvements would be gradually  
6 appreciated. Thank you.

7 MR. HOMER: Thank you, Ms. Guzi. The next  
8 speaker is Joyce Waugh. Welcome, Ms. Joyce Waugh.

9 MS. JOYCE: Thank you. Good to see you.  
10 And I'm here representing tonight the Virginia  
11 West Business and Legislative Coalition. It's a  
12 group of 15 Chambers in the western region with  
13 over 8,000 members.

14 Most of the comments that I have are  
15 related to projects that you have already heard  
16 about, and some are not in the Salem district but  
17 are very important, including 58 that you heard  
18 earlier, but also the completion of Route 29, the  
19 improvements, 73, but also, in addition to I-73,  
20 upgrading 220 from Buena Vista all the way to the  
21 North Carolina line.

22 That is important and it's becoming  
23 increasingly important since I-73 has been delayed  
24 over time. Delays are always expensive in more

1           ways than one. Not just the sheer cost as we are  
2           experiencing from the gas and asphalt and concrete  
3           and all of those things, but as we know with some  
4           of the other speakers, and also I-81, it costs  
5           lives.

6                     And one of the facts that I don't believe  
7           has been brought out yet, the percentage of  
8           fatalities of I-81 according to VDOT's 2003 stats,  
9           that it was that the percentage of fatalities was  
10          twice that of either 64 or 95. A lot of people  
11          don't realize just how important that is.

12                    Rail is a very important part of the  
13          solution, it is not the only part of the solution,  
14          and that's true across the board, especially where  
15          81 is concerned. Also, improvement to 221 and 11,  
16          460. We want to thank you for the work that is  
17          being done to improve the 11, 460 stretch just  
18          west of Salem and also for the wonderful work that  
19          has just been done to further the Heartland  
20          Corridor which we pushed both at the state and  
21          federal level.

22                    Meadow Creek Parkway up in the  
23          Charlottesville area is a very big project that  
24          needs to be completed. The southeast connector

1 road, which is in the Harrisonburg area. I  
2 skipped over U.S. 501 which we would like to see  
3 fast tracked over in the Lynchburg area as well.  
4 You have already heard about 221 and 122.

5 Route 37, also in the Harrisonburg area,  
6 the eastern loop, the improvements that are needed  
7 there, and also just focusing a little bit on  
8 rail, the transmini express and also the freight  
9 components. Those are very important to the  
10 long-term viability of our future.

11 And we appreciate even the leadership that  
12 we see and need more for air service, which is  
13 another component, but not here today. So thank  
14 you very much for your dedication and service to  
15 the Commonwealth of Virginia.

16 Your efforts to make all modes of  
17 transportation a safe and effective system for  
18 transporting goods and people is greatly  
19 appreciated. I would like to submit these to  
20 you.

21 MR. HOMER: Thank you, Ms. Waugh, we look  
22 forward to entering these into the written  
23 record.

24 Is there anybody else who would like to

1 speak? Is there any member of the Commonwealth  
2 Transportation Board who wants to say a word?

3 Okay, well, with that the Committee will  
4 rise, and on behalf of the Commonwealth  
5 Transportation Board I want to thank all of you  
6 for coming out to share these important thoughts.

7 There are very difficult decisions between  
8 now and mid June, and just in terms of the time  
9 line, any of you who have worked in the  
10 transportation arena know that you can't overnight  
11 change a program.

12 And so what we have said is to the degree  
13 that there is additional funding available we  
14 would need to know that by very early June in  
15 order to incorporate it into the program.

16 So that would be our hope, that the General  
17 Assembly is active prior to that to allow some of  
18 that to occur.

19 MR. KEEN: I would simply add that it's  
20 going to take eight million just to keep us where  
21 we are, if you remember that part of the  
22 presentation, so even if there is money coming  
23 from the legislature it's going to take a lot more  
24 than just what we have here for any new projects

1 or any additional monies to be put on existing  
2 projects to move our plan forward.

3 MR. HOMER: Thank you for that. With that,  
4 the Board will rise and, again, thank you for  
5 spending your time with us this evening.

6 (The Public Hearing was concluded.)  
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C E R T I F I C A T E

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

COUNTY OF BOTETOURT

I, Debra A. Howard, Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia, do hereby certify that the Hearing held on May 9, 2006, was by me reduced to machine shorthand in the presence of all the Parties, afterwards transcribed under my direction by means of Computer, and that to the best of my ability the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the Hearing as aforesaid.

I further certify that this Hearing was taken at the time and place in the foregoing caption specified.

I further certify that I am not a relative, counsel or attorney for either party or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand at Fincastle, Virginia, on this the 16<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2006.

Debra A. Howard  
Debra A. Howard  
Notary Public

My Commission expires September 30, 2006.